

What is claimed is:

- 1 1. A method for generating a prioritized view of a
2 plurality of messages, comprising the steps of:
3 defining one or more concepts against which a message
4 can be prioritized, the or each concept comprising one or
5 more conditions against which a message can be tested;
6 for each message, generating a fit to a selected one or
7 more of said concepts, said fit corresponding to whether or
8 not said message fulfils said conditions; and
9 creating a display representative of the respective
10 fits of said messages to said one or more selected concepts.

1 2. A method as claimed in claim 1 wherein said display
2 creating step comprises displaying respective cells
3 associated with messages in one or more rows or columns.

1 3. A method as claimed in claim 2 wherein said concept
2 defining step comprises associating a concept with a display
3 parameter comprising one of a colour or size.

1 4. A method as claimed in claim 3 wherein said display
2 creating step is responsive to a user selecting a
3 prioritized view according to a concept associated with a
4 colour, to display said cells in an intensity of said colour
5 proportional to the fit of their associated message to said
6 concept.

1 5. A method as claimed in claim 3 wherein said display
2 creating step is responsive to a user selecting a
3 prioritized view according to a concept associated with
4 size, to display said cells with a length proportional to
5 the fit of their associated message to said concept.

1 6. A method as claimed in claim 3 wherein said display
2 creating step is responsive to a user selecting a
3 prioritized view according to a first concept associated
4 with a colour and a second concept associated with size, to
5 display said cells in an intensity of said colour
6 proportional to the fit of their associated message to said
7 first concept and with a length proportional to the fit of
8 their associated message to said second concept.

1 7. A method as claimed in claim 3 wherein said display
2 creating step is responsive to a user selecting a
3 prioritized view according to first and second concepts,
4 each associated with a respective colour, to display said
5 cells in a colour according to the best fit of their
6 associated message to one of said first and second concepts.

1 8. A method as claimed in claim 7, wherein said display
2 creating step is responsive to a user selecting a
3 prioritized view according to a third concept associated
4 with size, to display said cells with a length proportional
5 to the fit of their associated message to said third
6 concept.

1 9. A method as claimed in claim 2 comprising the step of:
2 grouping messages into a plurality of groups, and
3 wherein said display creating step comprises displaying
4 respective cells associated with messages in a row or column
5 extending from their associated groups.

1 10. A method as claimed in claim 9 wherein said grouping
2 step comprises grouping said messages in discussion threads.

1 11. A method as claimed in claim 9 wherein said grouping
2 step comprises grouping said messages according to their
3 subject matter.

1 12. A method as claimed in claim 9 wherein said messages
2 are grouped by said user into a plurality of folders.

1 13. A method as claimed in claim 9 wherein messages groups
2 containing less than a predetermined number of messages are
3 merged into a "No Category" group.

1 14. A method as claimed in claim 1 wherein said messages
2 are email messages.

1 15. A method as claimed in claim 1 wherein each concept
2 comprises one or more scenarios, the or each scenario
3 comprising one or more of said conditions, and wherein said
4 fit generating step comprises testing each message against
5 the or each condition in the or each scenario for a user
6 selected concept to generate a fit for the or each scenario.

1 16. A method as claimed in claim 15 wherein said fit for
2 said concept is the highest of said fits for the or each
3 scenario.

1 17. A method as claimed in claim 15 wherein said fit for
2 said concept is the aggregate of said fits for the or each
3 scenario.

1 18. A message viewer for generating a prioritized view of a
2 plurality of messages, comprising:

3 means for defining one or more concepts against which a
4 message can be prioritized, the or each concept comprising
5 one or more conditions against which a message can be
6 tested;

7 means, operable on each message, for generating a fit
8 to a selected one or more of said concepts, said fit
9 corresponding to whether or not said message fulfils said
10 conditions; and

11 means for creating a display representative of the
12 respective fits of said messages to said one or more
13 selected concepts.

1 19. A computer program product comprising computer program
2 code stored on a computer readable storage medium for, when
3 executed on a computing device, generating a prioritized
4 view of a plurality of messages, the program code comprising
5 means for performing the steps of claim 1.